MOSLEM WOMEN.

There is a street in Constantinople devoted to the sale of perfumeries and articles of taste. I do not remember its name, but you enter it, after passing through a labyrinth of lanes and tortnous alleys, by an areade, and emerge upon an avenue of open stalls, at the door of each of which sits a bearded Turk. It is there that are sold exquisite essences of jasmine and bergamot; minute flasks of attar of roses in cases of embroidered velvet; rosewater: endless varieties of cosmetics; little bags of musk; Persian mirrors; carved hairbrushes; painted combs; and, in short, the whole arsenal of female coquetry. In the rear, up two or three flights of stairs, are stored in chests and drawers articles of greater value-perfume-censers of gold, inlaid stands, curious silver salvers, bells of nargiles is Khorassan steel, and innumerable knickknackeries of Oriental fantasy.

Ordinarily the women one meets in the streets of Constantinople are repulsive from their untidy dresses, and, if the yasmac of any one of them happens to fall, hideously ngly. But here were gathered the young wives of the harems. They had no end of money to spend. Credit for any amount purchased was readily given. The name of the husband opened all the treasures of the bazaar to the wives of the wealthy. Many had the reputation of being favorites to beys and bashaws, and were presumed to be beau-tiful. There were those who were accompanied by pretty children, dressed in rich jackets of red or green, and Mameluke trousers of cherry-colored silks. Negresses, clad in white or blue, followed their mistresses, cared for the babies, of whom there were many, and took charge of parcels to carry home. Ugly as the most expensive streetcostume of the Turkish lady invariably is, the groups of women and children, eunuchs and negresses, pages and dressing-maids, dowdy old servants and spruce errand-runners -for no Moslem wife of quality ever undertakes the slightest labor-that gathered around the stalls or formed in the street in earnest talk, were exceedingly picturesque. The very concealment of the faces of the women became incentives to imagination.

A Turkish merchant makes no efforts to sell his goods. Leaning on his elbow, he responds carelessly to the thousand questions, heaped one upon another, put to him by his female customers, who forage among the goods, and turn everything on his counters upside down. Incessant chattering goes onprices are asked, without waiting for answers -tapering fingers wander among the piles of beautiful wares, and eyes, flashing from be-hind heavy veils, tell of fancies pleased. Whispered pleasantries pass from one to another. Purchases are constantly being made amid incessant giggling. The children are indulged with presents, keepsakes pass among the ladies, the negresses tie together and place upon their heads the parcels they are to carry, payments are made, change of money is counted and mistakes are rectified, while the street is lively with incessant talking and merry laughter.

There are no female shopkeepers in Constantinople. Women are prohibited from selling goods. It is evident enough, however, that they avenge themselves in buying. Almost the only outside amusement in which respectable females — mothers, wives, and daughters of the wealthy—indulge with freedom and without scandal, is shopping. It is their one resource abroad. The contrast it affords to even the most luxurious home would be sufficient itself to give it zest. They breathe fresh air. They see their friends. They indulge their love of finery and jewels. They compare tastes with others of their rank. They hear gossip. They tell secrets. They enjoy scandal. And a chance for coquetry-when, no informer being near, the yasmac may be dropped on the instant-will perhaps occur. No wonder that shopping is relished by Turkish gentlewomen more even

than by their Christian sisters of Paris or New York. On every pleasant day, in all streets where are attractive shops, are to be seen throngs of dark-eyed women, groups of gay children, fat, dusky nurses, and weazened, beardless cunuch with the same exhibitions of chattering and laughter, good humor and frivolity. It is not the place in which to moralize upon the unhappy condition of Moslem wives. With that feminine perversity that can put adroitly the best upon the worst, they will not appear victims of degradation, such as modern civilization makes them to be. They may not compare favorably in sturdy character with the strong-minded women of the United States, but they are not fools. They are sometimes educated. They have womanly tastes. Their love and knowledge of flowers, gareening, colors, drawing, embroidery, and painting, surpass those of their must cultivated European sisters. They think. And they are not the slaves our Christian theories teach. The retort of a pacha's third wife, when an American lady expressed surprise that she should dress herself so beautifully when no gentlemen would see her besides her husband, has its point:- "Do you Christian ladies, then, dress for other men than your husbands? In fact, the bazaars that offer Cashmere

shawls and Broussa silks, amber bracelets

and peacock-feather fans, inlaid mirrors and

diamond brooches, are not favorable spots,

nor do the light-hearted, laughter-loving

customers that frequent them compose an

audience for severe moralizing upon the wrongs of polygamy. While the old Osmanli

sit in solemn, cross-legged composure, pro-

fessing for the "dogs of Christians" a con-

tempt as profound as that of their ancestors,

wives change their views. They become

tolerant. The Christian gentlewomen they

meet, each teaches a lesson; and the fellow-

feeling good-breeding gives draws the two Even at home the ladies of the harem have much to attract them. They are won by jewels and shawls, scarts, and all kinds of persuasive finery. As Georgian Christians, Mohammedanism loses its repulsive features to them in gorgeous mirrors, and the truths of Islam come persuasively to their young bosoms in the delicate folds of the Cashmere. The eyes of a devotee cannot be blind to diamonds and rubies, nor her ears deaf to eloquent pearls, torquoises, and aqua-marines. It is a strong faith, where religious belief is merely a name, that can resist the pleadings of dresses stiff with gold and bracelets, blazing with diamonds and sapphires. To dress with elegance and taste is the high ambition of a Moslem wife. There is nothing in Parisian fashion more attractive than the ghowbaz or white goldtissue on the voluptuous figure of a fairskinned Georgian, its front open, its ample sleeves descending to the knees, and its girdle, richly embroidered, confining the folds at the waist. Around the ankles are fastened bands of silver-gilt, and on the feet slippers of gold embroidery. A turban of white mus-lin upon the kead, and a Persian shawl thrown round the waist, complete a morning

toilet graceful in the extreme. It was the

pacha's sister.

of harem life, are no longer mysteries. At the door the lady-visitor is met by a cunuch. They pass through halls and antercoms, across a marble-floored court where a fountain plays, into a chamber whose walls are decorated with colored arabesque devices, the floor spread with Turkish carpets, and the centre occupied by scarlet velvet takhts or cushions. This is the waiting-room. Beyond is the parlor where the lady receives her guest. It is perfect in every appointment that Oriental luxury can supply. Reclining upon the velvet-embroidered mumud, the hostess seats her visitor by her side. Three girls with large black eyes and luxuriant raven hair approach, kneel, and present silver-gilt vases for ablution. Two others with censers perfume the apartment. Three more, with trays containing sherbet and gold embroidered napkins, followed still by three others carrying china-cups of coffee on salvers of gold inlaid with emeralds, enter, kneel, and present the refreshments. Truly, Moslem

wives are not barbarians. The lady from whose narrative we gain this knowledge was then conducted by her hostess to the private rooms. She describes them as magnificent. There were thirty bedchambers. The mattresses were covered with gorgeous silks. Upon the walls hung choice paintings. Wardrobes were filled with rich dresses. Drawers full of fine linen, toilet tables with needle-worked covers of snowy whiteness, dressing-cases filled with housewifery implements, jewel-boxes of ear-rings, necklaces, and brooches, and mirrors reaching from roof to floor, made every apartment a boudoir of elegance and taste.

From the dormitories to the terrace on the roof of the palace, where, shaded by awnings, they could see perhaps the finest panorama of water and land in the world, and thence to the gardens, occupying threequarters of a square mile, intersected by rivulets, the walks marble-paved, and the banks fringed with grass and flowers, the lady was conducted to the drawing-room, where she was to presented to the mother, sisters, and wives of the pacha. There were more than twenty present. They were variously engaged in sewing, embroidering, lacemaking, music, and games. The furniture of the room was in exquisite taste. Goodhumor and the utmost civilities abounded. Four of the ladies present were the wives of the pacha—one a Koordistan lady, one a Georgian, and two Circassians. The husband entered the room-a man of commanding stature, with black, copious beard, and sumptuously dressed—as any gentleman would enter his parlor, and with as little ceremony on either side. In the midst of a brief conversation, carried on in French, the voice of the mollah was heard calling from the minaret to prayer, when all dropped devoutly on their knees. Whatever they may be en-gaged in, Turkish men and women always perform their religious duties when the set moment arrives. The merchant driving a bargain or lady dressing for evening, the judge delivering law from the bench, and the sultan himself receiving his court, break off at once, kneel, prostrate themselves, and pray at the hour appointed. Devotions ended, the American lady made adieus and departed, escorted by the same keys-bearing eunuch through the doors and stairway.

Cairo is nearer to us, by half the time, than it was when I first saw it, twenty years ago. The grand canal is making wonderful changes; but the harems remain, and will remain, the same. In the secluded suburbs of the half-Frank city, the traveller might pause to-day near dull, dark walls, over which plantainbranches wave and scents of flowers steal, and listen to the laughter of the odalisks within. A song by half-cultivated voices, clapping of hands, tinkling of bells, shouts of girls engaged in merry games, the brief hush at the time of prayer, and the renewed sounds of hilarity when the minutes given to religious forms are past-all tell of at least one successful communism in the world, a communism five thousand years old before Owen failed in realizing his socialistic theories at New Lanark, or Noyes succeeded in puzzling psychologists by his successes in Oneida. Eastern wives are not convinced of the hardship of their state. They are ignorant of the sweets of liberty that women enjoy in Europe and America: have never witnessed the felicity that crowns a fashionable life in Paris or New York; know nothing of the peace of mind that rewards a London "season" or a Washington winter: and have never dreamed of the disinterested affection of ball-room belles in a country where women are free. To be sure, there is at their disposal all that their lord can command of luxury and pleasantness; his wealth is hoarded only for their delight and their children's good; he permits himself no ostentation or pleasure apart from them; the time is weary that absents him from home; and he never denies a reasonable request of wife or child. Criminals are led blindfold to execution, because to meet a woman and touch her garment is to secure pardon. But wives are guarded from tempta-tion; they receive visits from none of the other sex, and they are ignorant of the world. What woman would submit to these?

Seriously, however, the Eastern woman seems as happy as her European or American sister. Plurality of wives is no more hideous to her than it was to the favorites of the patriarchs. She feels no more disparagement as second wife than she would as second daughter. Jealousy is aroused, not by attention to another wife, but absence from all. In a harem of a hundred occupants-mothers, children, and servants-there are rarely four wives-the limit restricted by the Koran-and oftentimes but three or two. There is perfect order; harmony prevails—at least such is the universal testimony of Franks and Asiatics. Intimate friendships are formed. No public opinion is braved; and, though the Mussulman has no blind confidence in the strength woman's character, holding fast to Mohammed's aphorism, "If you set butter in the sua it will surely melt," and regards it more honorable to have temptation averted than resisted, his wives do not complain. Indeed, it is said that they suspect a lack of their lord's affections when he does not keep them closely watched.

In the markets of both Turkey and Egypt there are three classes of women to be purchased - negresses, Abyssinians, and Georgians. The two former can be easily seen. They are not strictly guarded. You find them grinding millet, kneading dough, chatting in the sunshine, sleeping in the shade. Their figures may have symmetry; but to an American they are wofully unattractive. Their price varies from one hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars each.

The bazaars containing Georgian and Circassian women are more difficult of access. They are on sale for the wealthy only. Strangers not known, or unlikely to be purchasers, are not permitted, as a rule, to see them. The most beautiful will command the price of twenty-five hundred dollars. Of course, they are carefully tended. My friend, who oblast year's style of morning dress, worn by a tained entrance, in company with a principal daughter of the Sultan, when visiting a officer of the sultan, to their apartments, spoke of them as exceedingly handsome.

The interior of the harem, and the habits of harem life, are no longer mysteries. At the door the lady-visitor is met by a cunuch. They pass through halls and anterooms, gether, some sitting in a dreamy languor. All their attitudes were graceful. In complexion they were exquisitely fair. There was no ap-pearance of discontent. They knew their lot, and did not repine at it. Like maidens as fair-if it be not ungallant to say it-in freer lands, each seemed desirous that her charms should be valued to a degree that would make her first favorite in her future home.

While there can be nothing more awkward in movements than a Moslem woman abroad, nothing can be more graceful at home. The former slouches through the unpaved lanes, her dress draggling, her figure shapeless, her feet hideous, and ber face covered by the thick yasmac-an object, unless when leaning upon a bazaar-counter or resting on the seats near the fountains, as little attractive as woman can be made to be. The latter, as lady of the harem, couched gracefully on Persian carpets strewed with cushions, is a picture to make the eyes brighten and pulses throb. The fair complexion, large, liquid eyes, long-fringed lashes, and low brow, set off by a gold-embroidered turban—most becoming of head-gear-from under which braids of black hair fall on either side, and a cataract of tresses behind; the rounded shoulders, full bust, large arms, long, tapering fingers with henna-dyed nails, uncorseted figure, and developed limbs; and the dress, composed of the pink under-tunic, covered by the long silk robe open at the bosom, and buttoned thence downward to the delicately-slippered feet that peep daintily from full trousers, a Cashmere shawl wrapped loosely around the loins rather than waist as a girdle, and a large silk robe with loose silk sleeves surmounting all-make of the Moslem wife, as, reclining upon silken cushions, she receives husband or friends, and does the honors of her home, a being too voluptuous, perhaps, for refined American taste, but who answers in every way to the idea of womanly beauty that obtains universally in the East.—Appleton's Journal.

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will open for the season on the 22d June. Besides the advantage of location this house enjoys, and the fine bathing contiguous to it, a railroad has been constructed since last season to convey guests from the hotel to the beach. The house has been overhauled and refitted throughout, and no pains will be spared to make it, in every particular.

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